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Race, Gender, Sexuality, Ability, Identity and Cycling

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ENDO: transforming cycle culture

Race, Gender, Sexuality, Ability, Identity and Cycling — UNIV 291 SEC 039

Course wrapup – #endobrb

by Erin White on October 8, 2015 in [Housekeeping](#)

We had a productive week here at #endobrb headquarters. We had some good discussion about [Podium Girls](#), [gender and sexuality in cycling](#), [access and infrastructure](#), [confederate iconography](#), [nude rides](#), [queer cycling clubs](#), [economic impacts of the race](#), and the [5 minutes in Richmond video](#). Our class of 20 ethnographers investigated the culture around the UCI championships and other bike-cultural phenomena in Richmond and around the world with a critical eye toward issues around race, gender, sexuality and ability.

Here are some the highlights of students' work.

Artifact analyses

The assignment: Find or create a call to action, a program, or a movement that could/is trying to open up bike culture to a more diverse participation. Write about how it could or does/n't work in RVA, what the roadblocks could be, how easily it could happen, etc. How would this "plug in" to what is already here in RVA as far as bike culture is concerned?

- [Rag and Bones](#)
- [Brompton World Championships](#)
- [E-Nable](#)
- [Room to Ride](#)
- [Critical Mass](#)
- [All Artifact Analyses >>](#)

Ethnographies

The assignment: Go outside your comfort zone—observe bike culture in 2 different settings geared toward 2 different groups of people (i.e. Lamplighter Addison St. vs. Broad St. Starbucks vs. Belle Isle); use your bike for transportation to a place you don't normally bike to; if you don't have a bike or can't ride, just post yourself at a location physical or virtual where you think bicycles will be and write a post with your observations.

Raquel's BuzzFeed ethnography of the race asked, [What Race?](#)

Aiden made a video for his ethnography project:



And Chadarryl interviewed one of the directors of the travel office for the race:



Hallie's [media analysis](#) of the race offered some great critical insights and big questions for us to ponder. First, an analysis of the captions for photos of female and male cyclists:

“ *The champion of the women's race gets “Fighting back tears” compared to the man's “National pride”, the top three women were captioned “All smiles” while the men got “Champion of the world”. The women were given emotional, tender captions and the men strong, intense ones. Take from that what you will.*

...then, a question about Richmond's priorities around cycling:

“ *We closed streets, shut down VCU, cancelled all of our plans and put the city on hold so that we could celebrate this army of physically pristine, world class cyclists occupying our town. Compare this to our complaints about student cyclists at VCU who take up space, get in the way of cars, cause general issues. Compare this to our complete lack of bike lanes in poor neighborhoods and seeming inability to understand that poor people can't just get healthier food, or to job interviews and work, or to school without access to safe, affordable transportation. Think about how we will raise 21 million dollars ([source](#)) to bring white, rich, talented cyclists to Richmond, but can't commit to plans to make our real, daily world bike friendly.*

Wow.

More ethnographies:

- [Queer Rides](#)
- [Bike Culture the fixie vs the roadie](#)
- [All Bike Ethnographies >>](#)



About Erin White

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< Final Lap: Finishing up!

One Response to *Course wrapup – #endobrb*



arverrelli October 19, 2015 at 8:58 am <#>

REPLY ↩

Erin, this is really cool. What a great experience (and perspective) for your students.

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